

P309

**GRACE NOTES RADIO PROGRAM
SERIES: ELIJAH – A MAN FOR THE TIMES
TITLE: TESTING PRECEDES BLESSING
SONGS: ONLY GOD KNOWS
CALVARY CAME THROUGH**

Welcome to Grace Notes. On our last program Barbara Sandbek talked about Elijah's discouragement over Queen Jezebel's threat to take his life. We saw how misplaced confidence, misplaced armor, misplaced energy, missed prayer, and missed rest, all contributed to bring him to the valley of despair. Today Barbara will share a time in her life when she, too, faced discouragement.

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I can sure identify with Elijah. I've missed and misplaced all these things at one time or another, and have found that when I do, I end up discouraged and confused.

But, I've concluded that the only reason we get confused is because we're unwilling to accept the truth. And the truth is that 'God is sovereign.' His ways are not our ways – His ways are always right! He didn't say all things are good, He said, all things work together for good.

We take our recording projects very seriously, pray much over them, and claim Psalm 37:5, which says...

"Commit your plans unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass."

On our recording project, 'The Best of God's Love,' we found that God had a different way to execute His plan than we had planned.

The trip to the studio took nine hours. About two hours into the ride, our car's transmission started slipping and I began coughing. The day before I was to do my vocals, I developed a fever and coughed all night. In case you don't know, that is not good for the vocal chords. I was only able to complete two songs the next day.

I was confused, embarrassed, disappointed...you name it. This was probably the greatest personal failure I'd ever experienced. We'd prayed, committed, planned, and worked very hard. Here I was doing God's work - and now this.

I knew where comfort could be found, though...in the Word. So, I went into the lobby of the motel and read for three hours, until I found what I was sure God had for me. On the long trip home I wrote this poem.

YOU WERE THERE ALL ALONG FOR ME

**I'm left alone with just my thoughts
No one to tell what's in my heart.
Your answer was "No"...or maybe "Wait"
But I can't tell...just can't think straight.**

**My faith is bruised...I feel betrayed.
Where were You, Lord...why didn't You stay?
I looked for signs I thought I saw
So I pursued...no doubts at all.**

**The door slammed shut...the time was wrong?
How long must I wait, dear Lord, how long?
I'm hurt, confused...do You really care?
It seems so dark. I can't see You there.**

**I'd go away if I thought I could
But I'd just turn back, I know I would.
I really trust You, You are so great
Though these silent times make my heart ache.**

**I'll humble myself under Your Mighty Hand.
You'll lift me up and I will stand.
In due time You'll move and I will see
That You were there all along for me.**

**It was raining while I was writing this poem, yet the sun was shining.
I looked up from my pad of paper to see a double rainbow in front of
us starting at one side of the highway and continuing over it to the other
side. I have never seen anything like it. It was as if God had orchestrated
it just for me. Like He was saying "There's a rainbow at the end of this
tunnel, kid – keep trusting me. I know all about it."**

***** ONLY GOD KNOWS *** 2:34**

Only God knows what you're feeling inside. He's surely a friend that sticks closer than a brother.

That was a good lesson to learn, but God had more in store for this faith test.

I developed bronchitis and sinusitis and was sick for eight weeks. We had to cancel concerts and do some on a wing and a prayer. Every time I thought of rescheduling, fear gripped my heart. My prayer was twofold. First, that the Lord would show me when He wanted us to reschedule, if ever, and second, that He'd confirm if He wanted us to continue in the ministry.

A month later, our car's transmission went up completely and couldn't be fixed. Knowing we had many miles to cover in our schedule, we realized we'd have to buy a new van. Where would we get the money? About that time a friend from the past called out of the blue to see how our ministry was going. I shared this need for prayer and she said she'd be willing to donate the additional funds we needed. WOW! What an incredible confirmation that He wanted US in THIS WORK. Now every time we get in the van we know we're CALLED! His ways are certainly not ours.

We'd received His answer to the second part of the prayer when all seemed darkest. God is rarely early, but He's NEVER LATE! Now what should we do about the recording? For this we had to be in the Word again. We began reading through the Bible and were quite taken back by the disobedience of the Israelites, especially when it was time to enter the Promised Land. You remember the story...

The Lord told Moses to send spies to check out the land to see if it was good. Joshua and Caleb came back saying, "Go for it!," but the other men said "There are giants over there - we can't beat them," They were afraid to trust God. So what did God do?

He promised to take care of these faithless people because they were His, but they would never receive the promised blessing because they wouldn't take a step of faith. Only Joshua, Caleb and those under twenty would get the blessing. This truth hit me hard. I realized...

**BEFORE EVERY GREAT BLESSING GOD WANTS TO GIVE US,
THERE'S GOING TO BE A FAITH TEST.**

If we're not willing to trust God even when we're afraid, we lose out on that blessing. Oh, He'll take care of us alright, but we'll never experience all He has for us.

I immediately picked up the phone and rescheduled. The fear I had was because I couldn't do it. Now I was truly ready to watch Him at work. The end result was that I was able to record ten more songs in 4 ½ hours, to my liking! We also found two other great songs during those down months, and the company let us include them at a small charge.

I'm sure I've not realized all the benefits from this delay, but I do know some. I was able to practice with the backgrounds and really 'own' each song. But more important than anything, I learned to revere God more for His sovereignty. Once I stopped pouting for myself, He also came to me with great comfort. I wouldn't trade this experience for anything.

GOD IS OUT FOR OUR BEST.

He does work all things out for His children's good.

HE NEVER MAKES MISTAKES!

My verses of comfort were in Peter 5:6-7...

Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's Mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time.

Cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

He cared enough to die!

***** CALVARY CAME THROUGH *** 5:05**

Thanks for joining the program.

**If this ministry has blessed you, please write and tell us.
And if God leads you, send along a love gift to help us in this endeavor.
Write to:**

**Sandbek Concert ministries
P.O. Box 581
Fallston, MD 21047**

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Join us again next time – Elijah will be back on the mountain.